



HR1522

LRB099 24055 MST 51814 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of Rev. Dr.
4 J.C. Smith, who passed away on October 12, 2016; and

5 WHEREAS, Rev. Smith was born in Porters, Alabama to J.C.
6 Sr. and Eliza (Hampton) Smith on July 8, 1930; and

7 WHEREAS, Rev. Smith moved to Montgomery, Alabama at the age
8 of 18 and began working for the Atlas Glass Company; he
9 enlisted in the United States Army in 1951, where he served two
10 years during the Korean War and was stationed in Okinawa,
11 Japan; he returned to Montgomery after the war and married
12 Willie Mae Myricks on June 3, 1956; and

13 WHEREAS, Rev. Smith was active in the civil rights movement
14 of the 1950s and 1960s; he and his wife took part in the
15 Montgomery Bus Boycott; he was arrested in 1956 for his
16 participation alongside Ralph Abernathy, Rosa Parks, and
17 Martin Luther King Jr.; and

18 WHEREAS, Rev. Smith graduated from Weaver's School of Real
19 Estate in Montgomery in 1958; from 1958 to 1962 he sold
20 insurance for the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company,
21 which was the largest company owned and operated by African

1 Americans for most of the 20th century; he owned and operated
2 Smith's Clothing Store; and

3 WHEREAS, Rev. Smith moved to Harvey in 1963 near the end of
4 the Great Migration; he became a licensed real estate salesman
5 and a journeyman carpenter; he joined Second Baptist Church in
6 Harvey and delivered his first sermon in November of 1964; he
7 continued his education and his political and civic
8 involvement; between 1966 and 1973, he participated in
9 Operation Breadbasket and was elected to the West Harvey School
10 District #147 board, where he served for 40 years; he graduated
11 from CBI with a bachelor's degree in theology; he started
12 Smith's Carpentry and founded Bethlehem Temple Missionary
13 Baptist Church; and

14 WHEREAS, Rev. Smith served as a delegate to the Democratic
15 National Convention in August of 2000; he served two years as
16 Vice-President of the National Caucus of Black School Board
17 Members from 1980 to 1982; and

18 WHEREAS, From the early 1980s, Rev. Smith was active with
19 the Progressive National Baptist Convention, where he served as
20 President of the Moderator's Council from 1992 to 1996; he
21 served in leadership roles in the Progressive Baptist State
22 Congress, the South Suburban Minister's Fellowship, and many
23 other associations; and

1 WHEREAS, Over the years, Rev. Smith helped to grow
2 Bethlehem Temple Missionary Baptist church; he was involved in
3 every aspect of the church, including the cleaning; in 1995, he
4 organized the Bethlehem Community Development Corporation,
5 where he served as Executive Director; and

6 WHEREAS, Rev. Smith was preceded in death by his parents;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, Rev. Smith is survived by his wife of 60 years,
9 Willie; his brother, Thomas Smith; his children, Jennifer
10 (Euclid) Strayhorn, Jonathan (Rochelle) Smith, Jeffery
11 (Heather) Smith, Jerrold (Crystal) Smith, and Jacques (Carly)
12 Smith; his grandchildren, Cortney Strayhorn, Tenecia
13 Strayhorn, Justin Strayhorn, Chelsea Strayhorn, Chauncey Sims,
14 Darrin Sims, Lauren Smith, Brooke Helburn, Rachel Smith, Mariah
15 Smith, Austin Smith, Amber Smith, Avery Smith, Amaris Smith,
16 Joslyn Smith, Jarrett Smith, and Caymen J.C. Smith; his
17 great-grandchildren, Eliya and Emmanuel Strayhorn; and a host
18 of cousins, nieces, and nephews; therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
20 NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
21 mourn the passing of Rev. Dr. J.C. Smith, and extend our
22 sincere condolences to his family, friends, and all who knew

1 and loved him; and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
3 presented to the family of Rev. Smith as an expression of our
4 deepest sympathy.